

Remarks

1. Status of the Claims

Presently pending are claims 1-23, of which claims 1, 11, and 17 are independent and the remainder are dependent.

2. Summary of Office Action

In the office action mailed January 4, 2007, the Examiner rejected all of the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2002/0122541 (Metcalf).

3. Response to Rejections

Under M.P.E.P. § 2131, a claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. Applicant respectfully submits that the anticipation rejection of claims 1-23 is improper and should be withdrawn, because the Metcalf patent fails to disclose or suggest the combination of elements recited in any of the claims.

The presently claimed invention is directed to a method and system for consolidated message notification in a voice command platform. As such, each of independent claims 1, 11, and 17 recites, in one way or another, the function of a voice command platform providing a consolidated summary of counts of messages waiting for a user at a plurality of message portals.

For example, independent claim 1 recites a voice command platform that is programmed "to receive a call from a user, to answer the call, and to send to the user a speech signal representing a consolidated summary of counts of messages waiting for the user at a plurality of message portals."

Similarly, independent claim 11 recites a voice command platform that includes, among others, the elements of "a user profile store including, respectively for each of a plurality of users, a consolidated message summary indicating counts of messages waiting for the user at a plurality of message portals" and "consolidated-message-notification logic executable by the processor to communicate to a given user, via the user communication interface, an indication of the counts of messages waiting for the user at the plurality of message portals, as reflected by the message summary for the given user."

And claim 17 involves the steps of "receiving from each of a plurality of separate message-portals a respective message-waiting count for a common user" and "presenting to the common user a spoken summary of the respective message-waiting counts for the plurality of separate message-portals."

Applicant does not find in Metcalf the combination of elements recited in any of claims 1, 11, or 17. In particular, Applicants do not find in Metcalf any disclosure of a voice command platform providing a consolidated summary of counts of messages waiting for a user at a plurality of message portals.

Furthermore, the portions of Metcalf that the Examiner cited in support of the anticipation rejection do not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention. For example, in rejecting the independent claims, and the Examiner cited paragraphs 0024 and 0040 of Metcalf as allegedly teaching (i) a voice command platform that sends to a user a speech signal representing a consolidated summary of counts of messages waiting for the user at a plurality of message portals, (ii) a voice command platform that communicates to a user an indication of the counts of messages waiting for the user at a plurality of message portals, and (iii) presenting to a

user a spoken summary of respective message-waiting counts for a plurality of separate message-portals. However, those portions, like the rest of Metcalf, do not teach those claim elements.

At best, paragraph 0024 teaches that an automated reception system may provide a caller with a speech prompt identifying context-based actions that the caller may ask the system to take, and paragraph 0040 teaches that a system/user configuration database may include logical flags indicating what features a subscriber is permitted to access, and indicating "whether a subscriber is to be notified when new incoming voicemail messages are recorded." However, that disclosure does not teach having the automated reception system providing a consolidated summary of counts of messages waiting for a user at a plurality of message portals, and the disclosure does not teach the invention recited in Applicant's claims.

As another example, in rejecting claim 17, the Examiner additionally cited paragraphs 0052 and 0053 of Metcalf as allegedly teaching the claim element of "receiving from each of a plurality of separate message-portals a respective message-waiting count for a common user." However, those paragraphs of Metcalf, like the rest of Metcalf, do not teach that claim element. Rather, at best, those paragraphs teach the concepts of an automated reception system interoperating with fax and e-mail systems and reading a caller's faxes or e-mails to the caller. Yet those concepts do not amount to the automated reception system receiving from each (or, for that matter, any) of a plurality of separate message-portals a respective message-waiting count for a common user.

Because Metcalf does not teach the combination of elements recited in any of the independent claims, Metcalf does not anticipate the independent claims. Therefore, Applicant submits that that independent claims are allowable. Furthermore, without conceding the Examiner's other assertions, Applicant submits that each of the dependent claims is allowable for

at least the reason that each dependent claims depends from one of the allowable independent claims.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-23.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss this case with the undersigned, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (312) 913-2141.

Respectfully submitted,

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